

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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LONDON FOR NYE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG, PFOR, TECH, MNUC

SUBJECT: THE INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE EVALUA-
TION PROGRAM (INFCEP) AND GERMAN PROPOSALS FOR
ALTERNATE FUEL CYCLES

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REF: A. STATE 091828 (NOTAL); B. BONN 7025 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: ELEMENTS IN GERMAN GOVERNMENT, NUCLEAR
INDUSTRY AND MEDIA ARE FOCUSING ON POSSIBLE "CARTER
POLICY COMPATIBLE" VARIATIONS IN EXISTING GERMAN
NUCLEAR FUEL CYCLE TECHNOLOGIES THAT WILL BE DISCUSSED
WITH U.S. OFFICIALS DURING LONDON MEETINGS. END

SUMMARY.

2. FRG DELEGATION TO LONDON SUPPLIERS' GROUP MEETING HAS PAPERS ON POSSIBLE VARIATIONS IN THE URANIUM-THORIUM FUEL CYCLE USED IN THE HIGH TEMPERATURE REACTOR (HTR) FOR URANIUM ENRICHMENT OF 93, 20 AND 9 PERCENT. THESE PAPERS EMPHASIZE THE NON-PROLIFERATION ASPECTS OF THE CYCLE BUT NEGLECT THE ECONOMIC PENALTY. PRELIMINARY RESULTS SUGGEST THAT NON-PROLIFERATION ASPECTS FAVOR HTR-FUEL WITH A U-235 ENRICHMENT OF 20 PERCENT AND A URANIUM 238/THORIUM-232 RATIO OF 1:1. THE SPENT FUEL WOULD CONTAIN 9 PERCENT FISSIONABLE URANIUM (U-232, 6 PERCENT; U-235, 3 PERCENT). THE FISSIONABLE CONTENT OF PLUTONIUM IS CALCULATED AS 76 GRAMS PER ELECTRICAL GIGAWATT DAY COMPARED TO 591 FOR A LWR.

3. THESE PAPERS HAVE BEEN PROVIDED TO THE FRG DELEGATION BY THE MINISTRY OF RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY (BMFT), RESEARCH CENTERS AND PRIVATE NUCLEAR INDUSTRY SOURCES. INFLUENTIAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE ALSO CARRIED STORIES THAT BASICALLY REPEAT THESE PROPOSALS THAT WILL BE RAISED BY THE FRG DELEGATION.

4. EMBASSY COMMENT: NON-PAPER ON THE INFCEP (REF B) WAS PASSED TO FRG OFFICIALS YESTERDAY. FRG DELEGATION IS LIKELY TO RAISE HTR VARIATIONS UNDER III (A) OF INFCEP NON-PAPER. THESE NEW CONCEPTS HAVE SURFACED IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSALS, AND WILL NOT RPT NOT DIMINISH OR DECREASE FRG REQUIREMENTS FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HIGHLY-ENRICHED URANIUM (HEU) IN THE SHORT OR MID-TERM. ALL EXISTING HTR PROJECTS REQUIRE THE USE OF HEU AND COULD NOT BE ADJUSTED TO THE UTILIZATION OF FUEL WITH A LOWER ENRICHMENT. PARTICULARLY, GERMANY'S THTR-300, 300 EMW HTR DEMONSTRATION REACTOR, COULD NOT BURN LEU WITHOUT A COMPLETE REDESIGN WHICH WOULD MEAN A SERIOUS SET-BACK TO THE GERMAN HTR PROGRAM.

5. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, FRG'S NEW ENERGY R AND D PROGRAM, NOW BEING DEBATED IN CABINET, WILL CONFIRM GERMAN COMMITMENTS TO FAST BREEDER REACTOR AND REPROCESSING PROGRAMS.

STOESSEL.

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Sent Date: 26-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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